

## SARAH S. STAFFORD.

[To accompany Bill H. R. No. 664.]

APRIL 18, 1860.

Mr. DUEL, from the Committee on Revolutionary Claims, made the following

## REPORT.

*The Committee on Revolutionary Claims, to whom was referred the memorial of Sarah S. Stafford, for payment of the services of her father, James Bayard Stafford, an officer in the navy of the revolution, report:*

The testimony before the committee proves fully that James Bayard Stafford entered the navy at the beginning of the war of independence, was in constant and active service, and in frequent and successful battles until its close; that his ship having been taken by a British man-of-war and recaptured by Commodore John Paul Jones, just before their encounter with the *Serapis* and *Scarborough*, he volunteered in the "*Bon Homme Richard*," where he received a severe sabre cut on the left shoulder, which, from unskilful treatment, reopened after a time, disabling both his arms, and occasioning him great suffering.

Commodore Barry, of the "*Alliance*," writes that "Lieutenant Stafford served through the whole war. At the request of the secret committee of Congress I sent him with a message to Henry Laurens, esq., a prisoner in the Tower of London. This duty he performed with great fidelity and success." Colonel Laurens, ex-president of Congress, and ambassador to Holland to negotiate for aid in our revolutionary struggle, was then a prisoner of war. The secret committee of Congress felt it highly needful to warn him that he must make no terms, accept no compromises into which the British might seek to draw him. This dangerous and difficult communication Commodore Barry offered to Lieutenant Stafford because his patriotism had been proved by his abandonment of lucrative business for the naval service, his courage often tested in action, while his education in England and Ireland gave him a familiarity with localities and manners most necessary for success. Your committee have the affidavits of many aged persons, cognizant of the above facts and of the difficulties of the service. Disguised as an Irish laborer, Lieutenant Stafford walked

from Wexford, in Ireland, to London, save the short water passage from Dublin to Holyhead, and walked back; every step of his enterprise taken at risk of ignominious death. The log-book of an American officer describes the punishment Lieutenant Stafford would probably have suffered if detected, as a seaman and British subject, (which he was, being the son of an officer of the British army,) taken under the American flag: "They were marched upon a floating machine, their bodies, legs, and arms so ironed that they could not bend either; the machine was towed at high water to a gallows erected by government orders; the hangman made the halters fast to the gallows, and left them to die at leisure; that is, by inches, as the tide fell."

It has been urged against the payment of naval service, that the revolutionary Congress promised to pay the army only. This cannot be proved to be other than an omission, and does not entail a like omission upon us. The army were at home; they united in counsel to secure justice. General Washington continually urged their claims upon Congress. The navy were tossed on foreign seas, in double danger of battle and of storm; they were few; unable to meet for counsel; they had no commander-in-chief—no Washington—to maintain their rights with authority, truth, and eloquence. Of the army General Washington says: "If, besides their wages, no further compensation is due—if they are to grow old in poverty and wretchedness, and owe to charity the miserable remnant of a life hitherto spent in honor—then shall I have learned what ingratitude is, and realized a tale which will embitter every moment of my future life."

Your committee believe that the toils, dangers, and sufferings of Lieutenant Stafford in the navy were equal to those of any officer of the army, thus strongly presented by its revered commander.

Again, it has been supposed that the navy were paid by the prizes they captured. The greater number of prizes were necessarily sunk or burned; our ships could not spare men to take them into friendly ports. Yet the cause of freedom reaped the benefit in the losses and the terror occasioned to the enemy. Of the prizes secured, two-thirds the value went to the use of the united colonies; one-third only rewarded the captors, and from this many expenses were to be deducted. Commodore Jones secured one-half to the captors. "What," he writes to Robert Morris, "is the paltry emolument of two-thirds of the prize-money to the finances of this vast continent?" A suggestion vastly more forcible now than then.

Sixty valuable merchantmen were abandoned at once to secure the Serapis for the good of the naval service. This ship, which had just cost the British government \$250,000, taken in 1799, was not paid for by France until 1783, and then but \$91,000 were received; and it was not until 1837 that this prize-money was finally ordered to be distributed to the captors, of whom scarce any remained to receive this tardy justice. Yet, "for nine days," says Dr. Franklin, "nothing else was talked of in Paris and Versailles" but this victory of the scarce sea-worthy and ill-provided Richard over staunch and well-provided antagonists, while many of her crew, especially those who had lost limbs, neglected and defrauded by unprincipled and rapacious marine agents, begged their bread in foreign ports. Captain Landais,

the French commander of the Alliance, who treacherously fired into the Richard, murdering many of her gallant crew, and risking the loss of the action, was the first man paid by the Congress in 1806.

Lieutenant Stafford was a volunteer in the action of the Richard ; his name, therefore, was not on the rolls, and his daughter can receive no prize-money under the law.

All governments pay for secret services, and in proportion to the ability required and hazards encountered. Congress annually appropriates money for secret service, which cannot be supposed to require great patriotism or ability, or to involve any dangers.

In view of the proof of Lieutenant Stafford's naval service throughout the war, of his wound, of the secret service, through all which he received neither payment nor prize-money, and believing that the pathetic description and stern claims of General Washington for the officers of the army apply with equal force to the navy, your committee decide that the prayer of the petitioner, to be paid in accordance with the resolutions of Congress for the revolutionary army, should be granted, and report a bill accordingly.

The first of these is the question of the origin of the human race. It is a question which has been discussed for many years, and has given rise to many different theories. The most common of these is the theory of evolution, which holds that the human race has evolved from a common ancestor. This theory is supported by many facts, and is generally accepted by the scientific community. Another theory is the theory of creation, which holds that the human race was created by God. This theory is also supported by many facts, and is generally accepted by the religious community. There are also many other theories, such as the theory of polygenism, which holds that the human race has evolved from many different ancestors. This theory is also supported by many facts, and is generally accepted by some of the scientific community. The question of the origin of the human race is a very important one, and it is one which has been discussed for many years. It is a question which has given rise to many different theories, and it is one which is still being discussed today. The theory of evolution is the most common of these, and it is generally accepted by the scientific community. The theory of creation is also supported by many facts, and it is generally accepted by the religious community. There are also many other theories, such as the theory of polygenism, which holds that the human race has evolved from many different ancestors. This theory is also supported by many facts, and it is generally accepted by some of the scientific community. The question of the origin of the human race is a very important one, and it is one which has been discussed for many years. It is a question which has given rise to many different theories, and it is one which is still being discussed today.